DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 259 369 CS 209 122

AUTHOR Schweitzer, John C.
TITLE How Academics and Practitioners Rate Academic Research.
PUB DATE Mar 85
NOTE 33p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (68th, Memphis, TN, August 3-6, 1985).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Comparative Analysis; *Information Utilization; Journalism; Reading Habits; *Research Utilization; *Scholarly Journals; User Satisfaction (Information); *Use Studies
IDENTIFIERS *Theory Practice Relationship

ABSTRACT

A five-page questionnaire was mailed to 709 persons on the subscriber list of the "Newspaper Research Journal" to determine if a problem existed between academic journalism researchers and practitioner consumers of the research. The questionnaire was constructed to measure the usefulness of various sources of information to the respondents, their frequency of reading several specific academic and professional or trade publications, how much of the various academic journals they read, and the usefulness of the articles in the journals they read. Results showed that more academics reported academic journals as being very useful to them than did practitioners. Surprisingly, both academics and practitioners concentrated their reading in the same academic journals. While a majority of the practitioners reported reading at least some of the articles in the academic journals they looked into, fully a third of the editors, more than any other group of practitioners, reported reading most of the articles in the journals they read. Both groups stated they would like to see more practical, problem oriented research reported in the academic journals. (HOD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ED257587

"How Academics and Practitioners Rate Academic Research"

A Paper Submitted

For Consideration To

The Newspaper Division

AEJMC Memphis Convention

by

John C. Schweitzer

Associate Professor

Department of Mass Communications

Texas Tech University

Lubbock, Texas

March 1985

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

John C. Schweitzer

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

"How Academics and Practitioners Rate Academic Research"

When this writer left the newspaper business some 15 years ago to pursue a Ph.D. in mass communication research, the editor's parting shot was, "If you ever publish an article in Journalism Quarterly, I'll never speak to you again." He went on to explain that he had never read an article in that scholarly journal that had helped him to put out a better newspaper.

It would seem that things haven't changed much in the intervening years. Recently several newspaper editors and columnists were asked to comment on the value of journalism schools' research to them.[1]

Larry Fuller of the Sioux Falls Argus Leader said:

> I look at the quarterlies that these scholarly people put out. But I find very little of practical value that comes out of these journalism research publications. ... I have not been very impressed by the journalism research that I have seen, as a source of practical application and assistance for newspapers.

Richard Leonard of the Milwaukee Journal was somewhat less charitable than Fuller. He said:

> Do you read Journalism Quarterly? Well they have these charts that X equals Y minus 9 and all that crap. I've given up. I've spent more time trying to figure that out and I finally found that it was totally worthless.

If that wasn't bad enough, James J. Kilpatrick said,

"I haven't seen great quantities of journalism 'research,' but most of the chi-square stuff is bullshit."

A survey conducted for the Associated Press Managing Editors asked:[2]

> Is Journalism Quarterly a useful tool for managing editors? Is it even of any interest to those of us involved in the practice rather than the theory of journalism?
>
> The answer probably depends on the individual. Are you interested in journalism theory? Do you have a little extra time for scholarly reading?

The answer to these questions, at least judging from a casual reading of the professional literature, would seem to be a resounding "NO!"

Are journalism academics the only researchers to suffer the slings and arrows of outraged practitioners? It would appear not. The relationship between researchers' findings and other groups of practitioners has been explored with similar results.

Holbert discovered that less than half the marketing managers he surveyed gave research an "extremely useful" rating. He found that research projects written in the marketer's language, addressing problems faced by the manager and providing results that could be implemented were those best received by the marketing managers.[3]

A study by Bellenger in 1979 concluded that marketing managers believed that market researchers too often couched their research findings in jargon, were overly technical and sometimes their findings were simply irrelevant.[4]

And advertising research has also come in for the same kinds of criticism as journalism and marketing research. Arndt found that much advertising research had been found to be "irrelevant in relation to what appears to be the important problems in the area."[5] Schultz pointed out that research users wanted, centered on "practical problems."[6]

A recent study by Rotfeld, Tinkham and Reid discovered that professional advertising researchers also gave academic researchers low marks for value. They pointed out that:[7]

> ... the practitioners found little relevance or value in academic research itself, usually based on what they believed to be the academics' ignorance of business realities.

A common thread woven through the criticisms has to do with an apparent lack of understanding of "real world" problems on the part of researchers leading, therefore, to irrelevance. According to Michael Burgoon, himself a journalism academic, the problem with much academic journalism research is that faculties are out of touch with what is going on in the newspaper business. He says, "I have been struck by how little time professors spend in active newsrooms. I do not see them in newspapers in college towns; I do not see them in large numbers at professional meetings. In my own school, I see little evidence of active involvement of professors in any news organization."[8]

Richard Leonard would seem to concur. He says, "Instead of some of these guys coming through with these complicated formulas and so forth, if they would come around to see me

and say, 'Hey, what would you like to have us research this semester?' I could give them a half dozen topics that would really have value for me and journalism."[9]

In their own defense, academics point out that "As soon as you start doing something for the industry, it will become applied and it won't have the same kind of academic values."[10] Burgoon also recognizes this dilemma when he says, "... consulting with or doing applied research is not really a part of the mission of that university. There are no rewards when it comes salary and promotion time for such activities, and, naturally enough, it ceases to occur."[11]

But applied research is being done, and it is being published, and, apparently, it is being read by practitioners. They simply don't seem to like what they read. As Jerry Sass of the Gannett Foundation points out, "If you are not familiar with research techniques yourself, it's difficult to appreciate what is being done in the academic community."[12]

Mauro put it somewhat more pointedly some years ago in the title of his ANPA News Research Report, "Putting research findings to work is not always easy, but it is always rewarding."[13] In that report, Mauro pointed out that "... not all of the data may provide actionable direction. But all of the data presented have provided insight into one phase or another of the newspaper business."[14]

The review of the status of academic research reported here suggests that although there is a willingness on the part of some professionals to write off academic research altogether,

there also seems to be some interest in academic research if it could be made more "practical," or more "useful," or both.

Because no systematic study of the opinions of practitioners toward academic research in journalism could be found, it was decided to conduct this study. The results of this study should allow an objective assessment of academic journalistic research by practitioners and academics. It should suggest ways of improving academic journalistic research from the participants' points of view and to compare the status of journalistic research done by academics with the assessment of advertising and marketing research by their professional constituencies.

The major purposes of the study reported here were:

1. To determine if a problem exists between academic researchers and practitioner consumers of the research.
2. If a problem does exist, to try to find and identify the dimensions of the problem and possible solutions.

Based on the comments reported earlier in this paper, it was anticipated that there would be substantial differences of opinion between the practitioners and the academics on virtually every question to be asked of them.

It was decided to ask both academics and practitioners the usefulness of various sources of information. It was anticipated that more academics would say academic journals and that practitioners would say professional or trade publications.

It was also anticipated that the readership of professional and trade publications as well as academic journals would clearly differentiate between the two groups of respondents.

It was also expected that the academics would place much more reliance on academic journals as sources of information than would professionals.

It was predicted that the practitioners would stress better writing, fewer quantitative studies and more practical, problem-oriented research studies when asked what changes were needed in academic journals to make them more useful.

Finally, it was expected that academics and practitioners would differ substantially from each other on their responses to eighteen specific statements having to do with academic research which were taken from two earlier studies.[15]

Method

Because one of the purposes of this study was to compare the results with those of the studies of advertising and marketing research, the original items from the Bellenger study were modified only slightly to conform to the nature of our subject. These items were also used in the Rotfeld, et al.

In addition to using eighteen of the Bellenger items, the questionnaire was constructed to measure the usefulness of various sources of information to the respondents, their frequency of reading several specific academic and professional or trade publications, how much of the various academic journals they read in addition to the usefulness of the articles in the various journals they read.

Respondents were also asked to indicate the one academic journal most useful to them and the one nonacademic publication most useful to them. Finally, they were asked to suggest changes in academic journals to make them more useful to them in their work as well as to comment on any subjects, problems, or areas they would like to see addressed by academic researchers.

The questionnaire was assembled and "pretested" on a half-dozen academic colleagues. Although some of the questions were considered general and perhaps even somewhat vague, it was decided to go ahead with the questionnaire without extensive revision. Extensive revision would have resulted in a much longer instrument and, at this exploratory state of in-

vestigation, general information is all that was needed to answer the questions posed of the research. And, judging from the responses, most respondents seemed able to handle the questions with little or no difficulty.

The questionnaire, consisting of five pages of questions, was mailed to 709 persons on the Newspaper Research Journal's subsriber list. This mailing list was used because of the nature of the publication's readership. It was believed that the readership of the Journal consisted of a large number of practitioners as well as academics. In fact, the Newspaper Research Journal was orginally planned to appeal to news professionals. In the prototype edition, the editor wrote, "This publication is for you as a newspaper professional or educator."[16]

A cover letter, the questionnaire, and a postage-paid return envelope were included in the package sent to each respondent. The cover letter explained the purpose of the study and promised a pre-publication copy of the results if the respondent wished to receive one.

Two questionnaires were returned as undeliverable. By the time the data were compiled, some two months after the original mailing, 319 useable questionnaires had been returned for a response rate of 45 percent. Because this response rate compared favorably with other, similar, studies, no follow-up mailings were done. The academics in the final count outnumbered the professionals 212 to 89. The remaining 18 respondents could not be classified as either practitioners or academics.

Results

The respondents were asked to indicate, on a five-point scale, the usefulness of each of five sources of information they might or might not use in their jobs.

Usefulness of general business publications. There was little difference between the academics and practitioners on this question. Only 17 percent of the academics indicated that general business publications were "very useful" to them. Similarly, only 18 percent of the practitioners gave the same response.

Professional or trade publications. Again, the responses were virtually the same for each group. On the average, both groups indicated that these publications were useful.

Academic journals. Here the expected differences between the academics and practitioners showed up. Only 8 percent of the professionals said that academic journals were "very useful" to them in their jobs. Among the academics, more said "very useful" than any other response. Nevertheless it was interesting to note that this was the modal response, not the majority response.

Other sources. The results for the remaining questions having to do with the usefulness of colleagues, trade or industry organizations, and professional organizations went in the expected direction with twice as many practitioners as academics saying the latter two sources were "very useful" to them. These results are reported in Table 1.

The four nonacademic publications getting the most "read regularly" votes by both groups were the ASNE Bulletin, Editor & Publisher, Presstime, and the Columbia Journalism Review. Only slightly more of the professionals (33.7 percent) read the Bulletin regularly than the academics (27.4 percent). And, if it weren't for the fact that a majority of the editors (59 percent) read the Bulletin regularly, the practitioners' scores would have been even closer to the academics' scores.

By far the best read nonacademic publication among both academics and practitioners was Editor & Publisher. E & P was read regularly by a majority of all respondents regardless of status. Some 54 percent of the academics read E & P regularly compared with 73 percent of the practitioners.

The next two best-read nonacademic publications were presstime and the Columbia Journalism Review. As might be expected, presstime was read regularly by a majority of the professionals (64 percent) and by a plurality of the academics (42 percent). The Columbia Journalism Review, on the other hand, was read by a majority of the academics (55 percent) and a plurality of the practitioners (43 percent). What is more interesting about these data is that editors behaved much more like academics in their reading habits than they did their professional colleagues. For example, whereas 64 percent of all the practitioners read presstime regularly, only 36 percent of the editors read the publication regularly; much closer to the readership pattern of the academics than to the other practitioners.

Also, 68 percent of the editors reported reading the Columbia Journalism Review regularly compared to only 43 percent of the practitioners generally. Again, editors are closer to academics, 55 percent of whom read the CJR regularly, than they are to the other professionals.

These results are reported in Table 2.

Academic journal readership. The only academic journal read by a majority of both academics and practitioners was the Newspaper Research Journal. Among academics, 61 percent report reading it regularly. Among practitioners, 64 percent report reading it regularly. Among the practitioners, it is interesting again to note that nearly 82 percent of the editors report reading the Newspaper Research Journal regularly compared with, for example, only 72 percent of the research people who read it regularly. Naturally, because the mailing list was from the Newspaper Research Journal, it should be expected that its regular readership would be high. Actually, it was expected that it would be higher for both groups than it was.

Journalism Quarterly was also read regularly by a majority of the academics, but was read by only a plurality of the practitioners (37 percent). Here again it is very interesting to note that fully 59 percent of the editors responding to the survey reported reading Journalism Quarterly regularly. By way of contrast, only 28 percent of the research managers read Journalism Quarterly regularly. See Table 3.

Amount read and usefulness of what is read in academic journals. More important than regularity of readership perhaps, is the amount of the issue read. Neither academics nor practitioners reported reading "most" of the articles in the issues of the academic publications they read. But, the majority of both groups reported reading at least "some" of the articles in each issue.

When asked to rank, on a five-point scale, the usefulness of the articles they read in academic journals, the modal response for both groups was the mid-point (3) on the scale. Among the academics as a group, 40 percent gave the articles a 4 or 5 ranking on the five-point scale. Among the professionals, only 26 percent gave the articles a 4 or 5 ranking. Clearly the academics ranked the articles more useful as was predicted. See Table 4.

Most useful academic journal. When asked which of the academic journals with which they were familiar was the most useful, the academics singled out Journalism Quarterly with the Newspaper Research Journal receiving the second most number of votes. Among practitioners, however, the vote was just the opposite, with the Newspaper Research Journal winning first place and Journalism Quarterly in second place. These results are found in Table 5.

Most useful nonacademic publication. All of the academics rated Editor & Publisher as the most useful nonacademic publication. None of the practitioners rated E & P as the most useful to them. In fact, there was little agreement

among the practitioners as to which was the most useful publication. Editors voted for th ASNE Bulletin, advertising/marketing people voted for Advertising Age as did the research people. Top management liked presstime the best followed closely by E & P. So, the results of this question show more disagreement between practitioners than contrasts with academics. Academics didn't agree with the practitioners, but they were consistent. These results are shown in Table 6.

Changes needed in academic journals to make them more useful. Among the many suggestions given by all the respondents, there was widespread agreement on two. Among the practitioners responding to the questionnaire, the clear majority suggested more practical, problem-oriented research studies which could be more readily applied to the newspaper business. The second most often mentioned suggestion was for better, more clear writing. These suggestions were certainly expected from the other studies as well as from the comments quoted in the earlier part of this paper.

What was not expected was that the academics agreed with the practitioners as to the first two suggestions, although not in as large numbers. The most votes given to a single subject (24 percent) by the academic respondents was to more practical problems. The second most often mentioned suggestion was for better, more clear writing (23 percent). In other words, the academics and practitioners agreed completely with each other on the two most important changes needed to make academic journals more useful.

Areas or problems that academic researchers could address. Respondents were extended an invitation to make recommendations for future research. Actually only about one-half of both groups responded to the question. And, there is no clear-cut response among either group. The two most often mentioned groups of problems by the practitioners as a group had to do with readership, circulation and problems related to obtaining and retaining readers. This area was the fifth most often mentioned by the academics. Among academics, the most commonly mentioned problem area in which they would like to see more research was teaching techniques mentioned by 11 percent of the total number of respondents. Naturally this area was not mentioned at all by most of the practitioners except, interestingly, by 9 percent of the editors.

Reporting processes and the area of ethics, law and credibility were the second most often mentioned areas of concern by the academics. Except for 13 percent of the editors, the practitioners were pretty much uninterested in these subject areas.

The second most often mentioned group of problems by the practitioners had to do with the business aspects of the newspaper. This area ranked far down the list of academics' priorities.

A comparison ranking of problems for further research is shown in Table 8. Although there seems little surface agreement on the topics to investigate, there, again, seems to be better agreement between the academics and the editors.

Opinions regarding academic research. The results of the series of 18 agree-disagree statements which came from the studies measuring attitudes toward advertising and marketing research are shown in Table 9. The results were surprising. There was far more agreement between the academics and practitioners than disagreement. The two groups of respondents basically agreed with each other on all but five of the eighteen statements:

1. The practitioners disagreed with the academics that they "regularly use academic research findings in making decisions."
2. The practitioners overwhelmingly disagreed with the academics that "some of my major decisions are based on information provided by academic research."
3. The practitioners disagreed with the academics that "academic research has many applications in my job."
4. The academics disagreed with the practitioners that "academic research is frequently too complex to be useful to me in my job."
5. The academics disagreed with the practitioners that "most academic research is too abstract to be useful in the real world."

Some of the areas of agreement were as surprising as the fact that there was so little disagreement between the two groups. For example, the two groups agreed that "academ-

Discussion

This research was undertaken to investigate systematically whether there is a problem between academic journalism researchers and practitioners, and if a problem exists, to try to identify the dimensions of it along with possible solutions.

The paper started with several informal comments made by editors as reported in an Associated Press Managing Editors report. The comments of the editors were universally negative with respect to journalism research and journalism researchers. Further, investigations of the regard with which other professionals held academic research were also negative. Therefore, the predictions made with respect tc the outcomes of the research reported here were also negative. It was anticipated that the study would verify the comments made by the editors quoted earlier.

The results are really quite contrary to what had been expected.

There were few differences between the academics and the practitioners with respect to the usefulness of various sources of information with the exception of academic journals. As expected, more academics reported academic journals as being "very useful" to them than did practitioners.

It was somewhat of a surprise that the academics and practitioners concentrate their reading in the same academic journals. In fact, it was a surprise that as many practit-

ioners regularly read academic journals as did. Even more surprising was the number of editors who reported reading regularly both Journalism Quarterly and the Newspaper Research Journal.

The fact that academics and practitioners tend to read the same trade and professional publications was also an interesting finding. It suggests that both groups tend to be influenced by the same content and, therefore, should both have the same picture of the problems and opportunities in the newspaper business.

While a majority of the practitioners reported reading at least "some" of the articles in the academic journals they looked into, fully a third of the editors, more than any other group of practitioners, reported reading "most" of the articles in the jouranls they read.

It would certainly appear from these data that editors generally tend to keep up with academic research in journalism. The question is what do they think of it?

The comments made by the academics and practitioners concerning what could be done to make academic journals more useful are also interesting. These results make clear that both preacitioners and academics would like to see more practical, problem-oriented research reported in the academic journals. In many respects this result should not be surprising since journalism education is, after all, profession-based and many journalsim educators are former practitioners. If there is a conflict of values in this area, it may lie more within

the halls of academe than between the mainline educator and practitioner. That is, there is some evidence to suggest that the "green eye shade/chi-square" split in academics is alive and well.

On the other hand, because the practitioners also seem to understand the importance of theory (see responses to items 3,11, and 16 in Table 9). It appears that they are asking for more theoretically useful articles rather than, as one put it, "brute empiricism."

It also appears that the academics as well as practitioners would welcome better written, more clear articles. One professional suggested having a professional editor screen all articles submitted for publication to insure that they were written in English. But academicians also object to jargon and "academese" in journal articles. Both camps would welcome closer attention to writing by journal editors.

There also seemed to be little objection to statistics by the practitioners as such as long as the text also explained the findings. What many academicians as well as practitioners objected to was esoteric statistical procedures which obscured the findings. Another objection by practitioners was the apparent disregard or, worse, lack of understanding for how the findings of studies might be used in the "real world."

It was interesting, however, to see the apparent respect for "real world" problems by many of the academics in this study.

Conclusions

The most apparent and encouraging conclusion to be drawn from these results is that there is apparently less a schism between academics and practitioners than originally thought. There are, of course, differences, but it would appear that they are not as serious as might have been expected.

Rotfeld, et al. discovered that advertising research managers found little relevance or value in academic advertising research.[17] The results reported here more closely parallel those of Bellenger who found that while marketing managers criticized research for being too full of jargon, and overly technical, they still had relatively positive attitudes toward marketing research in general.[18]

These results suggest that while journalism practitioners would like to see better written articles and more problem-oriented research, they still value academic research and they even seem to recognize the value of theoretical research providing its relevance is made clear to them. What they do object to, along with many of the academics, is research for research's sake, poorly written and irrelevant to the problems they face as newspaper professionals.

It seems to this writer, at least, that these results are very encouraging to academics. It would also seem that the conclusion reached by Rotfeld, et al. is even more appropriate here if we simply substitute "journalism" for "advertising"

while reading:[20]

> Few would argue that journal articles can or should serve only the specific decision-making needs of advertising practitioners--such needs tend to be very narrow and short-run while journals must appeal to broad audiences with studies (of necessity) conducted one or two years in the past. Academic advertising research, however, should provide basic theoretical perspectives for practitioner's activities and future applied research. This function of basic research makes it potentially invaluable to the practitioner community; but it is of little value if it is never read, developed or applied. As the major suppliers of basic research, academics should write not just for each other, but also for the 'leading' practitioners.

Because this research was conducted among practitioners who were at least on the mailing list of a research journal, it is possible that they may be more research oriented than the norm. It would be a good idea to repeat this study among a more truly representative sample of practitioners. But, in the meantime, it appears that the comments quoted early in this paper are not, necessarily, representative.

References

1. "Should research in journalism schools be of genuine value to the newspaper industry?" A report of the Journalism Education Studies, Associated Press Managing Editors Association, San Diego, California, November 9-12, 1982.

2. French, George R., "A journal on journalism: Can 'Journalism Quarterly' be a useful tool for editors?" Research--Where Do We Go From Here? Readership & Research Committee, Associated Press Managing Editors. Nov. 1-4, 1983, Louisville, Kentucky.

3. Holbert, Neil, "How Managers See Marketing Research," Journal of Advertising Research, 14 (December 1974), 41-6.

4. Bellenger, Danny N. "The Marketing Manager's View of Marketing Research," Business Horizons, 22 (June 1979), 59-65.

5. Arndt, Johan, "What's Wrong With Advertising Research?" Journal of Advertising Research, 16 (June 1976).

6. Schultz, Don E., "Media Research Users Want," Journal of Advertising Research, 19 (December 1979).

7. Rotfeld, Herbert J., Tinkham, Spencer F., and Reid, Leonard N., "What Research Managers Think of Advertising Research By Academics," in Jugenheimer, Donald W., editor, Proceedings of the 1983 Convention of the American Academy of Advertising. Lawerence, Kansas: William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of Kansas, 1983.

8. "A challenge to journalism education," in: 10 good J-schools, 1983 Report, Journalism Education Committee, Associated Press Managing Editors, Louisville, Kentucky

9. "Should research in journalism schools . . . op. cit.

10. "A challenge to journalism education," op. cit.

11. Ibid.

12. "Should research in journalism schools . . ." op.cit.

13. Mauro, John B., "Putting Research Findings to Work Is Not Easy, But It Is Always Rewarding," ANPA News Research Report No. 16 (December 18, 1978), 1-6.

14. Ibid.

15. Bellenger and Rotfeld, et. al., op. cit.

16. Stone, Gerald C., editor, Newspaper Research Journal, prototype edition, (April 1979), emphasis added.

17. Rotfeld, et al., op. cit.

18. Bellenger, op. cit.

Table 1

Percentage of respondents indicating
which source of information was "very useful" to them.

Source	Academics	Editors	All Practitioners
General Business Publications	17	19	18
Professional/Trade Publications	46	50	40
Academic Journals	30	9	8
Colleagues	32	46	54
Trade/Industry Organizations	14	5	25
Professional Organizations	14	20	27

Table 2

Nonacademic publications read regularly by academics and practitioners. In percent of respondents.

Publication	Academics	Editors	All Practitioners
ASNE Bulletin	27	59	34
Advertising Age	9	6	34
Ad Week	1	0	15
Broadcasting	8	0	8
Editor & Publisher	54	68	73
presstime	42	36	64
Columbia Journalism Review	55	68	43
Washington Journalism Review	30	18	12
Quill	24	27	11
Miscellaneous Advertising/Marketing	3	0	22
Miscellaneous News	18	27	16

Table 3

Percentage who regularly read
Journalism Quarterly and Newspaper Research Journal

Publication	Academics	Editors	All Practitioners
Journalism Quarterly	71	59	37
Newspaper Research Journal	61	82	64

Table 4

Usefulness of Academic Journal Articles

	Academics	Editors	All Practitioners
	%	%	%
Very Useful (5)	19	0	5
(4)	21	29	21
(3)	39	38	43
(2)	16	33	25
Not at all Useful (1)	4	0	6

Table 5

Single Most Useful Academic Journal

Publication	Academics	Editors	All Practitioners
Journalism Quarterly	52	27	30
Newspaper Research Journal	11	64	40

Table 6

Single Most Useful Nonacademic Publication

Publication	Academics		Editors		All Practitioners	
	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Editor & Publisher	27	1	19	2	18	2
ASNE Bulletin	5	4	38	1	4	5
Advertising Age	4	5	5	5	19	1
presstime	14	3	10	4	13	3
CJR	16	2	14	3	8	4

Table 7

Changes needed in academic journals to make them more useful by rank.

Recommended Change	Rank order by: Academics	Editors	All Practitioners
More practical, problem-oriented	1	1	1
Better writing, more clear	2	2	2

Table 8

Comparison of rank-order suggestions
for research by academics and practitioners.

Recommendation	Academics	Editors	All Practitioners
Readership/circulation	5	1	1
Teaching/curriculum	1	5	7
Reporting processes	2	5	4
Ethics/law/credibility	2	3	4
Business/economics	6	1	2
New technology	6	3	7
Practical, problem-oriented	4	5	4
Advertising/marketing	-	-	3

Table 9

Opinions expressed about academic research by respondents.

STATEMENT:	RESPONSES: Strongly Agree		Agree		No Opinion		Dis-Agree		Strongl Disagre	
	% Ac	% Pr	% A	% P	% A	% P	% A	% P	% A	% P
Academic research is very useful to me in my work	40	9	34	53	12	14	13	19	1	6
I regularly use academic research findings in making decisions	17	4	32	25	17	15	27	46	7	9
Academic research findings do not represent the "real world."	10	17	21	25	11	18	45	35	13	2
Academic researchers seem more concerned with techniques than with problem-solving	18	24	36	46	18	17	21	8	7	1
Some of my major decisions are based on information provided by academic research	13	4	36	28	17	12	23	8	11	11
Academic research data is not accurate enough to be used in decision making	1	5	5	10	25	27	49	46	20	7
Academic research is of little use to me in my job	6	8	17	26	9	11	36	43	32	10
Academic research is more useful for editors than for advertising or marketing managers	1	3	5	11	31	24	45	39	18	20
Academic research is frequently too complex to be useful to me in my job	4	12	27	35	15	14	36	28	18	8
"Gut feelings" are more useful than research published by academics	0	0	6	14	19	17	42	52	34	17
Most academic research is too abstract to be useful in the "real world."	9	7	29	42	11	14	37	30	14	6
Academic research never seems to produce definitive results	6	3	29	29	16	17	39	44	9	3
Academic research has many applications in my job	21	2	34	33	16	18	24	39	4	7
Many academic research techniques are too technical to be of use to me	6	8	34	44	10	14	33	27	16	4
Generally, academic research is very practical	4	1	25	10	16	19	42	58	13	10
Academic research seldom tells me anything new	3	1	16	24	15	16	51	52	15	7
Academic researchers usually relate their findings to the newspaper business	1	0	13	14	21	32	52	35	13	17
Most academic researchers understand the newspaper business	2	0	18	4	30	32	36	43	14	19